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Talk over NBC by Congressman Mike Mansfield on April 21, 1944.

CHINA: A KEY TO VICTORY

My fellow Americans:

This is my third radio talk with you concerning the Far East. My purpose in discussing this field is to keep you informed about what is happening there and to emphasize the importance of that area in this global war.

You are all aware of our successes in the Pacific over the past year and we are justly proud of McArthur, Halsey, Nimitz, Chennault, and Stilwell and the boys who fight under their commands. But their job has been a long and hard one and the end is, as yet, nowhere in sight. We cannot afford to believe those who say that Japan will be defeated before Germany, because there is absolutely no basis for that statement. Neither should we be complacent about our successes or about the size of our navy or the fact that we are building 12 warships every day - Sundays included.

While we are scraping the bottom of our manpower barrel to garrison over 50 fronts scattered all over the world, the Japanese have almost 2 million men who have not been called to the colors because they are not needed.

In estimating our enemies we must use common sense and look at them as they really are. Our best military minds recognize the Jap as a first class fighting man. Yes, he's short in stature, his clothes are ill-fitting, and he's not much on the parade ground. But, in the field he is tough, fanatical, and has a do-or-die spirit. His equipment is good and he can subsist on far less than our boys. His industrial capacity is far better than we give him credit for even if, in quality and quantity, he lags behind. These people, who are supposed to be only imitators, are today building single seater fighter planes that fly in excess of 350 miles an hour, that have a higher maneuverability than ours, and a rate of climb that compares well with our planes.

Since Pearl Harbor, Japan has become the richest nation in the world and has every natural resource needed to carry on the war. She can, if given time, become perhaps the most powerful military nation the world has ever seen. Japan has no qualms about using the 400,000,000 people it has conquered as a huge pool of subject labor. She is mobilized for a long war, her people eat one third of what they used to, and every energy is directed toward the killing of Allied soldiers. Japan has made full use of the limited initial resources of a weak nation and has fought a careful and orthodox war with two exceptions - Midway and the fleet action at Guadalcanal. The Japanese intend to make us pay heavily for every success we achieve and their defense, as at Tarawa, New Guinea, and elsewhere, shows careful planning.

In fighting Japan we must keep open the longest supply line in history. To illustrate: it takes 44 ships, 3200 crewmen, and 165,000 barrels of oil to move 100,000 tons of supplies to Australia each month. To move that amount by air would require over 10,000 planes, approximately 120,000 crewmen, and close to 10,000,000 barrels of gasoline. And these supplies would be enough for an Army to wage a minor engagement only. It is even more difficult to transport supplies to our great Asiatic Ally, China. China, with its almost half a billion people born to the oldest culture in the world, struggling, fighting, and dying to preserve her nationhood, has been in this war for almost seven years. Her material conditions have changed for the worse, her richest industrial areas have been lost, widespread inflation has set in, her troops are still inadequately armed, but today she is as confident of final victory as ever.

China will be the main front in the Pacific War. Even if the Japanese Navy is meeting its match, this cannot yet be said of the enemy Army, entrenched in a vast land domain from Manchuria to Burma. Recently two top American commanders have emphasized in specific terms the nature of the task that lies ahead on the continent of Asia. On February 8, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz told newspapermen: "My objective is to get ground and air forces into China as soon as possible. I don't believe Japan can be defeated from the sea alone." To this he added the unequivocal declaration: "I believe Japan can be defeated only from bases in China."

Five days later, Lieutenant General Joseph W. Stilwell declared that Admiral Nimitz's naval drive across the Pacific to the China coast "Must be supported heavily by an aggressive Allied land and air offensive projected from the interior." Asserting that "vital China-based air operations cannot wait for a penetration of the blockade by land or sea," he stated that facilities are being prepared inside China to service "the largest and newest cargo carriers available."

All sea and overland routes to China - with one exception - are cut off. The one exception is the Northwest Caravan Route from Sinkiang Province into China proper. At the present time negotiations are being carried on between China and Russia concerning the transportation of supplies from the U.S.S.R. via this route but no agreement has, as yet, been reached.

The only route now is an aerial one over the "Hump" of the Himalayas, and there the Army Air Transport Command and the China National Aviation Corporation are doing a remarkably efficient job. When China first proposed this route to our authorities she was told that the mountains were impassable, the Indian monsoons impenetrable, and when skies were clear Japanese interception would become fatal. All these factors have been overcome and today more material is being flown into China than ever went in over the Burma Road.

Every item of equipment necessary for the maintenance and operation of Chennault's air force in China must be flown in from the outside. This is the fundamental fact of our strategy in China. Transport planes flying the round trip between Assam and Kunming can deliver four tons of 100 octane gas, but to do so they must themselves use $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons of the precious commodity.

It is no secret that many planes flying over the Hump have been lost without trace. In the last eight months of 1942 - when transportation over the Himalayas began - more than a fourth of the planes used were wrecked, shot down, or destroyed. Today, the flights go forward on schedule, and until such time as we can either capture a seaport on the China coast or we conquer Burma to permit opening another overland route to China, this route is of the greatest importance and to date is all we have.

We can control the air completely; we can sweep the seas clean; but even then, we will be a long way from winning our war in the Pacific. This war will be decided by the bayonet and the rifle, and that means the infantryman will carry the burden. That is where China comes in because she has the manpower and the will to use it. China's army has been trained well in the use of small arms - the rifle and the machine gun. She has the experience and the strategic location. This war may end not with the conquest of Japan's Pacific holdings or even with the defeat and conquest of Japan itself. It may very likely end in Manchuria where this war started in 1931 and it is there that mammoth land armies may well decide this barbaric struggle.

For this reason - and it is not so far fetched as some may think - China must be given every possible assistance and soon. While we have not given her all the supplies she needs, we have been making superhuman efforts and the results are only now beginning to tell. In the last eight months of 1942 we sent in over the Hump - 5500 tons of material by air and in 1943 we raised that to 63,000 tons of which 13,300 tons were

flown in the month of December alone. This shows remarkable progress and some day when the history of the air ferry from India to China is known, this country will realize that there are no greater heroes in this war than the boys who fly the big transports over the Himalayas. The result now is only a trickle but when the Ledo road is completed and the Burma Road reopened it will swell and when we conquer our first seaport on the China coast it will become a torrent.

Before this happens the Chinese and Americans will have to continue to fight and fly shoulder to shoulder. The Chinese do not wish to make the war in Asia an American burden but would rather that America give them the tools so that they could do the job.

To implement transportation into China, there is being undertaken at present the building of the Ledo Road from Assam in India through northern Burma toward the Chinese frontier. About 150 miles have already been built and, if we can capture Myitkina, a Japanese held railroad terminus in northern Burma before the monsoon rains begin in May, the road should be completed by next fall or winter and another highway into China made a reality. Then, in conjunction with the "Hump" we should be able to send in material enough to start to drive the Japs out of China.

General Joe Stilwell deserves all the credit in the world for his foresight in building the Ledo Road. The American-Chinese forces are working together and doing a great job. The finishing touches will come when the strength-starved China theatre gets the ships, planes, and men to make it possible. Before this can be accomplished the Japanese invasion of India - and it is a serious threat - must be thrown back. If Auchinleck and Mountbatten do not stop the Japanese, the supply routes for the Ledo Road will be cut and all our transport and ground operations in Assam and North Burma will be dangerously menaced.

The Cairo Declaration was one of the first indications that this country and England at last realized the full import of the situation in the Far East. Unlike the Teheran Conference, which was mostly, if not entirely, occupied with European problems, the Cairo declaration stated that Japan must surrender unconditionally. Furthermore, it stated that Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores shall be restored to China. These statements or promises mean much to China and the Far East but they do not settle all the questions concerning territory which she considers - and rightly so - hers. No mention is made of the return of Hongkong and Kowloon by England, of Macao by Portugal, of Kwangchow-wan by France, or of Outer Mongolia and Tannu Tuva by the U.S.S.R. These are Chinese territories and should be returned to China at the earliest possible moment. We are not fighting this war to bring about the return of the status quo ante in the Far East. To do so would only mean another war in the future. China is not fighting for territorial aggrandizement, but she is determined to reacquire the lands which have been taken away from her by force.

The Cairo Declaration was significant not so much for what it said but for what it left unsaid. It touched on Japanese imperialism; it said nothing of the Occidental type.

Most people in this country think that after Germany's fall Japan's punishment will logically and inevitably follow. That assumption is correct but it is not shared by the military clique which rules Japan even though we have sunk over 500 ships of her merchant fleet through the work of our submarines; even though we produce over 9,000 planes a month to her 1,000; even though our tank and ship production is greater than hers; and even though we exercise complete control of the mid, southwest, and north Pacific sea and sky lanes.

Japan believes that in a few years she can correct her present evident weaknesses if she is not seriously harassed by us. And she is certainly not being seriously hurt, except on the outer fringe of her empire, at the moment. The Japs think that we will become weary of a war

that does not directly affect our shores and that our people will eventually insist upon a compromise peace leaving Japan with the greater part of her present gains. This would well suit Tojo because it would allow Japan to consolidate her gains and exploit them to the limit at which time she would resume her advance toward world mastery.

How long can Japan hold out? The Japs think forever. They are wrong. Too many Americans think for only a few months or a year at the most. They are wrong, too. No one can answer the question, but everyone can be assured that it will require every ounce of our energy and ability to do the job, and that applies to the man on the farm, the worker in the factory, the legislators in Washington, and the boys at the front. The Japanese say we will not make any sacrifices and they emphasize our "softness". They look upon us as weaklings, they play up our disunity, and they question our fighting spirit. They think all these elements will give them time to obtain complete control of all their conquests. They have made no provision for failure, and they feel the American people will give in when the going gets really tough. Will we? The answer is no, because we likewise have made no provision for failure.